



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2023-0427; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01370-T]

RIN 2120-AA64

#### Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus SAS Model A318, A319, A320, and A321 series airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by reports where the passenger door external handle mechanism was not retrieving its normal, flush position when the door was being closed. This proposed AD would require a one-time cleaning and lubrication of the external door handle mechanism of each affected door, and would limit the installation of affected parts, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is proposed for incorporation by reference (IBR). The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West

Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

*AD Docket:* You may examine the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2023-0427; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, the mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

*Material Incorporated by Reference:*

- For EASA material that is proposed for IBR in this NPRM, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); website [easa.europa.eu](https://easa.europa.eu). You may find this material on the EASA website at [ad.easa.europa.eu](https://ad.easa.europa.eu). It is also available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2023-0427.

- You may view this service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dat Le, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone 817-228-7317; email [Dat.V.Le@faa.gov](mailto:Dat.V.Le@faa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Comments Invited**

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include “Docket No. FAA-2023-0427; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01370-T” at the beginning

of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov), including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this NPRM.

### **Confidential Business Information**

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Dat Le, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone 817-228-7317; email [Dat.V.Le@faa.gov](mailto:Dat.V.Le@faa.gov). Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

### **Background**

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2022-0213 R1, dated November 8, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-

0213 R1) (also referred to as the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus SAS Model A318-111, A318-112, A318-121, A318-122, A319-111, A319-112, A319-113, A319-114, A319-115, A319-131, A319-132, A319-133, A319-151N, A319-153N, A319-171N, A320-211, A320-212, A320-214, A320-215, A320-216, A320-231, A320-232, A320-233, A320-251N, A320-252N, A320-253N, A320-271N, A320-272N, A320-273N, A321-111, A321-112, A321-131, A321-211, A321-212, A321-213, A321-231, A321-232, A321-251N, A321-251NX, A321-252N, A321-252NX, A321-253N, A321-253NX, A321-271N, A321-271NX, A321-272N and A321-272NX airplanes. Model A320-215 airplanes are not certificated by the FAA and are not included on the U.S. type certificate data sheet; this proposed AD therefore does not include those airplanes in the applicability.

The MCAI states one operator has reported two cases of a passenger/flight crew door external handle flap remaining stuck in an intermediate or fully pushed position (not flush with the door skin) on two recently delivered Model A320 series airplanes after the door was opened from outside. With the external handle flap in this intermediate position, in one of the reported cases, the operator was not able to open the door normally from inside. Subsequent investigation determined that on the production line of one door supplier, corrosion protection compound (CPC) was inadvertently applied to the movable parts of the mechanism during production. The CPC, when applied to these parts leads to a sticky effect and prevents the passenger door external handle flap from moving to the closed position, which is flush with the fuselage skin. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could inhibit opening the door from the inside, or allow the door to open, automatically disarming the slide/raft, which would result in its non-automatic deployment. Both scenarios could delay a safe evacuation of airplane occupants during an emergency. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2023-0427.

### **Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51**

EASA AD 2022-0213 R1 specifies procedures for cleaning and lubricating the movable parts of the external passenger door handle mechanism of affected doors. EASA AD 2022-0213 R1 also limits the installation of affected parts.

This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in ADDRESSES.

### **FAA's Determination**

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA's bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, it has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA is issuing this NPRM after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

### **Proposed AD Requirements in this NPRM**

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2022-0213 R1 described previously, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD.

### **Explanation of Required Compliance Information**

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA developed a process to use some civil aviation authority (CAA) ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has been coordinating this process with manufacturers and CAAs. As a result, the FAA proposes to incorporate EASA AD 2022-0213 R1 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2022-0213

R1 in its entirety through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Using common terms that are the same, as the heading of a particular section in EASA AD 2022-0213 R1 does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to “all required actions and compliance times,” compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled “Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)” in EASA AD 2022-0213 R1. Service information required by EASA AD 2022-0213 R1 for compliance will be available at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2023-0427 after the FAA final rule is published.

### **Costs of Compliance**

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 1,864 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

| <b>Estimated costs for required actions</b>      |                   |                         |                               |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Labor cost</b>                                | <b>Parts cost</b> | <b>Cost per product</b> | <b>Cost on U.S. operators</b> |
| Up to 4 work-hours<br>X \$85 per hour =<br>\$340 | \$50              | Up to \$390             | Up to \$726,960               |

### **Authority for this Rulemaking**

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA’s authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency’s authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds

necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

### **Regulatory Findings**

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Would not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

### **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

### **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

### **PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES**

- 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

#### **§ 39.13 [Amended]**

- 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

**Airbus SAS:** Docket No. FAA-2023-0427; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01370-T.

**(a) Comments Due Date**

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**(b) Affected ADs**

None.

**(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to all Airbus SAS airplanes identified in paragraphs (c)(1) through (4) of this AD, certificated in any category.

(1) Model A318-111, A318-112, A318-121, and A318-122 airplanes.

(2) Model A319-111, A319-112, A319-113, A319-114, A319-115, A319-131, A319-132, A319-133, A319-151N, A319-153N, and A319-171N airplanes.

(3) Model A320-211, A320-212, A320-214, A320-216, A320-231, A320-232, A320-233, A320-251N, A320-252N, A320-253N, A320-271N, A320-272N, and A320-273N airplanes.

(4) Model A321-111, A321-112, A321-131, A321-211, A321-212, A321-213, A321-231, A321-232, A321-251N, A321-251NX, A321-252N, A321-252NX, A321-253N, A321-253NX, A321-271N, A321-271NX, A321-272N, and A321-272NX airplanes.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 52, Doors.

**(e) Unsafe Condition**

This AD was prompted by reports where the passenger door external handle mechanism was not allowing the flap handle to return to its normal, flush position when the door was being closed. Subsequent investigation concluded corrosion protection compound (CPC) was inadvertently applied to the movable parts of the mechanism



during production. The CPC prevents the handle flap from moving to the closed position, flush with the fuselage skin. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could inhibit opening the door from the inside, or allow the door to open, automatically disarming the slide/raft, which would result in its non-automatic deployment. Both scenarios could delay a safe evacuation of airplane occupants during an emergency.

**(f) Compliance**

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

**(g) Requirements**

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0213 R1, dated November 8, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-0213 R1).

**(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2022-0213 R1**

(1) Where EASA AD 2022-0213 R1, refers to November 3, 2022 (the effective of EASA AD 2022-0213, dated October 20, 2022), this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) This AD does not adopt the “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2022-0213 R1.

**(i) Additional AD Provisions**

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)*: The Manager, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal

inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer*: For any requirement in this AD to obtain instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(3) *Required for Compliance (RC)*: Except as required by paragraph (i)(2) of this AD, if any service information referenced in EASA AD 2022-0213 R1 contains paragraphs that are labeled as RC, the instructions in RC paragraphs, including subparagraphs under an RC paragraph, must be done to comply with this AD; any paragraphs, including subparagraphs under those paragraphs, that are not identified as RC are recommended. The instructions in paragraphs, including subparagraphs under those paragraphs, not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the instructions identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to instructions identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

**(j) Additional Information**

For more information about this AD, contact Dat Le, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone 817-228-7317; email [Dat.V.Le@faa.gov](mailto:Dat.V.Le@faa.gov).

**(k) Material Incorporated by Reference**

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless this AD specifies otherwise.

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0213 R1, dated November 8, 2022.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA AD 2022-0213 R1, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); website [easa.europa.eu](http://easa.europa.eu). You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at [ad.easa.europa.eu](http://ad.easa.europa.eu).

(4) You may view this service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, email [fr.inspection@nara.gov](mailto:fr.inspection@nara.gov), or go to: [www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html](http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html).

Issued on March 2, 2023.

Christina Underwood, Acting Director,  
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2023-04639 Filed: 3/7/2023 8:45 am; Publication Date: 3/8/2023]